

**ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
INDIANA COMMISSION ON AUTISM**



**Indiana Legislative Services Agency  
200 W. Washington Street, Suite 301  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204**

**November, 2010**

# INDIANA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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## **INDIANA COMMISSION ON AUTISM**

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#### **Staff**

Francine Rowley-Lacy  
Attorney for the Commission

Chris Baker  
Fiscal Analyst for the Commission

A copy of this report is available on the Internet. Reports, minutes, and notices are organized by committee. This report and other documents for this Committee can be accessed from the General Assembly Homepage at <http://www.state.in.us/legislative/>.

## **I. STATUTORY DIRECTIVE**

The Indiana General Assembly enacted legislation (IC 12-11-7-5 and IC 12-11-7-6) directing the Commission to do the following:

- (1) Study the service delivery system for individuals with autism and the families of individuals with autism, including the following:
  - (A) An analysis of the number of Indiana citizens believed to have autism.
  - (B) Funding amounts and sources.
  - (C) Types of expenditures and services provided.
  - (D) The number of clients served.
  - (E) Relationships among agencies and organizations.
  - (F) Residential options for individuals with autism.
- (2) Study the need for and effectiveness of programs for individuals with autism.
- (3) Oversee and update the development of a comprehensive plan for services for individuals of all ages with autism.

The Legislative Council did not assign any specific topics to the Commission for the 2010 interim.

## **II. SUMMARY OF WORK PROGRAM**

The Commission met 3 times during the interim, on August 10, September 15, and October 27, 2010.

Details concerning the Commission's proceedings are available in the Commission's minutes, which can be accessed from the General Assembly website at: <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>

## **III. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY**

The Commission received information at the three meetings concerning the following:

- (1) An update from the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS), on:
  - (A) the status of the service delivery system;
  - (B) waiting lists; and
  - (C) funding and costs for services.
- (2) An update from the Indiana Resource Center for Autism (Center) that included the accomplishments that the state of Indiana has made regarding autism and autism training programs, challenges the state will encounter, the need for and effectiveness of programs for individuals with autism, and future projects of the Center.
- (3) An update from the Autism Society of Indiana concerning the Indiana comprehensive plan on autism, including the relationships among agencies and

organizations.

(4) An update from the Christian Sarkine Center for Autism concerning their work with medical students, residents, community physicians, individuals with autism and their families.

(5) Information from the Center on Community Living and Careers, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Indiana University (CCLC) concerning the projects and initiatives that CCLC is involved in, which include:

- (A) a benefits information network;
- (B) a corporate development initiative;
- (C) employment specialist training;
- (D) financial literacy and asset development;
- (E) the Indiana Secondary Transition Resource Center;
- (F) the Social Security and Ticket-To-Work program;
- (G) the Vocational Rehabilitation Leadership Academy; and
- (H) the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Transition From School-To-Work program.

(6) A summary of the services Options, Inc. (Options) provides for people with disabilities, which include: supported living, supported employment, community habilitation, group living behavior support, affordable housing and technology supports. A report from Options on the challenges facing individuals with disabilities and possible solutions and recommendations for organizations that provide services for those individuals.

(7) A summary of the services Christole, Inc. (Christole) provides for children and adults with developmental disabilities, which include:

- (A) health care coordination;
- (B) group homes; and
- (C) supported living.

A description of a crisis situation was given by Christole personnel.

(8) A summary of the services that CEO, IN-PACT, Inc. (IN-PACT) offers to individuals with developmental disabilities. IN-PACT personnel gave a report on the status of group homes and autism waivers in Indiana from 1983 to the present and the need for group homes to continue to exist as an alternative for families who have safety issues concerning their loved one who has a developmental disability.

(9) A summary of the bullying laws in Indiana from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). An overview from the IDOE of the programs, training, and resources provided by IDOE to combat the existence of bullying in schools. An overview from IDOE of the state policy guidance for use of seclusion and restraints in schools.

(10) A summary of proposed legislation for the 2011 session of the Indiana General Assembly from Representative Tyler concerning the creation of a school bullying prevention task force for students with disabilities.

(11) A summary of proposed legislation for the 2011 session of the Indiana General Assembly from the Arc of Indiana concerning the use of restraint and

seclusion in schools.

#### **IV. COMMISSION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Commission made the following recommendations:

The Commission recommends that the ISTEP exam include an essay question concerning bullying.

The Commission recommends introduction during the 2011 session of the Indiana General Assembly of legislation based on Preliminary Draft 3495, as amended, (a preliminary draft of proposed legislation concerning the creation of the school bullying prevention task force to: (1) study the causes and effects of bullying on students with disabilities in schools; (2) identify practices that reduce incidences of bullying against students with disabilities; (3) highlight training and technical assistance opportunities for schools to effectively address bullying against students with disabilities; and (4) evaluate the effectiveness of schools' current anti-bullying policies and other anti-bullying programs as they apply to students with disabilities).

## WITNESS LIST

Bert Clemmons, CEO, Christole, Inc.

Ann Davis, Coordinator of Special Education, Indiana Department of Education

John Dickerson, Executive Director, The Arc of Indiana

Teresa Grossi, Director, Center on Community Living and Careers, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Indiana University

Herbert Grulke, CEO, IN-PACT, Inc.

Tom Harmas, Principal, Creekside Middle School

Rich Hogue, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, Indiana Department of Education

Julia Cunningham Holloway, Director, Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

Joyce Koester, Director of Programs Operations, Christole, Inc.

Dr. Cathy Pratt, Director, Indiana Resource Center for Autism

Dana Renay, Executive Director, Autism Society of Indiana Chapter

Susan Rinne, Executive Director, Options, Inc.

Virginia Rugenstein, grandparent of Logan

Dr. Naomi Swiezy, Clinical Director, Christian Sarkine Autism Treatment Center, Program Director, HANDS in Autism